



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/964,585	09/28/2001	Toyoji Ikezawa	214607US2	2408

22850 7590 02/17/2004

OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.  
1940 DUKE STREET  
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314

EXAMINER

LEROUX, ETIENNE PIERRE

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2171

DATE MAILED: 02/17/2004

7



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.



J

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/964,585

Applicant(s)

IKEZAWA ET AL.

Examiner

Etienne P LeRoux

Art Unit

2171

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 28 September 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 3\_6.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_.

### *Specification*

Applicant is advised of possible benefits under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), wherein an application for patent filed in the United States may be entitled to the benefit of the filing date of a prior application filed in a foreign country.

The incorporation of essential material in the specification by reference to a foreign application or patent, or to a publication is improper. Applicant is required to amend the disclosure to include the material incorporated by reference. The amendment must be accompanied by an affidavit or declaration executed by the applicant, or a practitioner representing the applicant, stating that the amendatory material consists of the same material incorporated by reference in the referencing application. See *In re Hawkins*, 486 F.2d 569, 179 USPQ 157 (CCPA 1973); *In re Hawkins*, 486 F.2d 579, 179 USPQ 163 (CCPA 1973); and *In re Hawkins*, 486 F.2d 577, 179 USPQ 167 (CCPA 1973).

Applicant is reminded of the proper language and format for an abstract of the disclosure.

The abstract should be in narrative form and generally limited to a single paragraph on a separate sheet within the range of 50 to 150 words. It is important that the abstract not exceed 150 words in length since the space provided for the abstract on the computer tape used by the printer is limited. The form and legal phraseology often used in patent claims, such as "means" and "said," should be avoided. The abstract should describe the disclosure sufficiently to assist readers in deciding whether there is a need for consulting the full patent text for details.

The language should be clear and concise and should not repeat information given in the title. It should avoid using phrases which can be implied, such as, "The disclosure concerns," "The disclosure defined by this invention," "The disclosure describes," etc.

In instant abstract, applicant includes acronyms SFA and SCM. Use of acronyms does not sufficiently disclose the invention such that readers do not have to consult the full patent text. Correction is requested.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 1-4, 9, 10, and 18-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by US Pat No 6,338,050 issued to Conklin et al (hereafter Conklin).

Claims 1 and 19:

Conklin discloses a method for managing sales activities, said method comprising the steps of:

- storing, in a database, a plurality of activity item information sets respectively representing each of a plurality of sales activity items included in sales activities for achieving a business transaction, in association with each of a plurality of stages according to which the plurality of sales activity items are classified based on progress of the business transaction [seller processes, sponsor processes and buyer processes per Fig 1g, order activity 58 per Fig 1g and col 19, lines 7-55]
- retrieving one or more activity item information sets stored in the database, in response to an instruction from an operator of a terminal [order activity 58 per col 19, lines 34-37]

Art Unit: 2171

- controlling a display device of the terminal to display both of the one or more retrieved activity information sets and information representing one of the plurality of stages which corresponds to the one or more activity information sets [browser per col 19, lines 34-37]

Claims 2 and 20:

Conklin discloses the step of storing, in the database, activity item evaluation information representing whether each of the plurality of activity items has been attained, in association with each of the plurality of activity item information sets [col 19, lines 65-67].

Claim 3:

Conklin discloses the step of controlling the display device of the terminal to display the one or more activity item information sets in association with the activity item evaluation information, by stage [Fig 1m and col 20, lines 47-61].

Claim 4:

Conklin discloses the step of storing, in the database, in a case where the activity item evaluation information represents that each of the activity items each associated with one of the plurality of stages has been attained, stage completion information representing that the one of the plurality of stages has been completed [Fig 1m and col 20, lines 47-61].

Claim 9:

Conklin discloses the step of storing, in the database, the activity item information sets in association with information representing the business transaction, according to each target business transaction having business activities including the activity items shown in the activity item information [Fig 1k and col 20, lines 22-32].

Claim 10:

Conklin discloses the step of storing, in the database, a scenario of the sales activities toward a customer of each target business transaction, in association with information representing the customer [col 20, lines 4-21].

Claim 18:

Conklin discloses a sales-activity management system comprising:

- sales-activity-information storage means for storing, in a database, sales activity information regarding sales activities performed for achieving a business transaction [seller processes, sponsor processes and buyer processes per Fig 1g];
- sales-activity-information retrieval means for retrieving the sales activity information stored in the database [order activity 58 per col 19, lines 34-37];
- sales-activity-information display means for displaying the retrieved sales activity information on a display device, and wherein said sales-activity-information storage means stores, in the database, activity item information representing the sales activities, in association with a plurality of stages according to which the sales activities are classified based on progress of the business transaction [browser per col 19, lines 34-37] and order activity 58 per Fig 1g and col 19, lines 7-55],
- said sales-activity-information retrieval means retrieves the activity item information stored in the database, in response to an instruction of an operator of a terminal [browser per col 19, lines 34-37]

Art Unit: 2171

- said sales-activity-information display means controls the display device of the terminal to display the activity item information retrieved by said sales-activity-information retrieval means, in association with information representing each of the stages corresponding to the activity item information. [browser per col 19, lines 34-37] and order activity 58 per Fig 1g and col 19, lines 7-55].

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claims 5-8 and 11-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Conklin.

Claims 5 and 15:

Art Unit: 2171

Conklin discloses the elements of claims 1, 2, 11 and 12 as noted above.

Conklin fails to disclose the step of storing, in the database, information representing a completion scheduled date of each of the plurality of stages.

However, Conklin discloses in Background of the Invention as admitted prior art, problems identifying exact order and dates of transmission and receipt [col 7, lines 45-57].

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the admitted prior art disclosed by Conklin to include the step of storing, in the database, information representing a completion scheduled date of each of the plurality of stages.

The ordinarily skilled artisan would have been motivated to modify the admitted prior art disclosed by Conklin for the purpose of positively identifying contract terms by date to avoid transaction ambiguity [col 7, lines 47-51].

Claims 6 and 16:

Conklin discloses the elements of claims 1, 2, 5, 11, 12 and 15 as noted above.

Conklin fails to disclose the step of storing, in the database, in a case where the activity item evaluation information represents that one of the activity items each corresponding to one of the stages has not yet been attained even after the completion scheduled date has passed, information representing that the business transaction is delayed at one of the plurality of stages.

However, Conklin discloses in Background of the Invention as admitted prior art, problems identifying exact order and dates of transmission and receipt [col 7, lines 45-57].

Art Unit: 2171

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the admitted prior art disclosed by Conklin to include the step of storing, in the database, in a case where the activity item evaluation information represents that one of the activity items each corresponding to one of the stages has not yet been attained even after the completion scheduled date has passed, information representing that the business transaction is delayed at one of the plurality of stages.

The ordinarily skilled artisan would have been motivated to modify Conklin per the above for the purpose of identifying items which need to be expedited to prevent possible production interruptions [col 5, lines 35-50]

Claim 7:

Conklin discloses the elements of claims 1, 2 and 5 as noted above.

Conklin fails to disclose the step of displaying information representing the completion scheduled date of each of the stages and information representing an attainment status of each of the stages, in association with each of the stages, and wherein the information representing the attainment status represents in a case where at least one activity item information set represents that one of the activity items each corresponding to one of the stages has not yet been attained, that the business transaction is being delayed at one of the plurality of stages, and in a case where the activity item information sets respectively represent that the activity items each corresponding to one of the stages have been attained, that the one of the plurality of stages has been completed.

However, Conklin discloses in Background of the Invention as admitted prior art, problems identifying exact order and dates of transmission and receipt [col 7, lines 45-57].

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the admitted prior art disclosed by Conklin to include the step of displaying information representing the completion scheduled date of each of the stages and information representing an attainment status of each of the stages, in association with each of the stages, and wherein the information representing the attainment status represents in a case where at least one activity item information set represents that one of the activity items each corresponding to one of the stages has not yet been attained, that the business transaction is being delayed at one of the plurality of stages, and in a case where the activity item information sets respectively represent that the activity items each corresponding to one of the stages have been attained, that the one of the plurality of stages has been completed.

The ordinarily skilled artisan would have been motivated to modify Conklin per the above for the purpose of identifying items which are on schedule and identifying items which are behind schedule so that the business operations are not adversely impacted.

Claim 8:

Conklin discloses the elements of claim 1 as noted above.

Conklin fails to disclose the step of controlling the display device of the terminal to display a message for suggesting the operator to change an action of the activity item evaluation information representing that one of the activity items has not yet been attained, when changing the activity item evaluation information corresponding to one of the activity items in association

Art Unit: 2171

with a first stage of the plurality of stages so as to represent that the one of the activity items has been attained, in a case where the activity item evaluation information represents that one of the activity items corresponding to a second stage of the plurality of stages where the business transaction has been progressed to a level lower than a level of progression at the first stage has not yet been attained.

However, Conklin discloses a display [Fig 1a] and discloses in Background of the Invention as admitted prior art, problems identifying exact order and dates of transmission and receipt and problems associated with production purchasing [col 7, lines 45-57 and col 5, line 35 through col 6, line 15].

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Conklin to include the step of controlling the display device of the terminal to display a message for suggesting the operator to change an action of the activity item evaluation information representing that one of the activity items has not yet been attained, when changing the activity item evaluation information corresponding to one of the activity items in association with a first stage of the plurality of stages so as to represent that the one of the activity items has been attained, in a case where the activity item evaluation information represents that one of the activity items corresponding to a second stage of the plurality of stages where the business transaction has been progressed to a level lower than a level of progression at the first stage has not yet been attained.

Art Unit: 2171

The ordinarily skilled artisan would have been motivated to modify Conklin per the above for the purpose of updating the status of the items being purchased so that production schedules are not impacted [col 5, line 35 through col 6, line 15].

Claim 11:

Conklin discloses:

- a storage section which stores information necessary for executing the process
- said processor stores, in a database, a plurality of activity item information sets respectively representing a plurality of activity items included in the sales activities performed for achieving a business transaction, in association with each of a plurality of stages according to which the plurality of sales activities are classified based on progress of the business transaction,
- retrieving one or more activity item information sets of the plurality of activity item information sets stored in the database, in response to an instruction from an operator of a terminal, and
- controlling a display device of the terminal to display both of the one or more retrieved activity information sets (and information representing one of the plurality of stages which corresponds to the one or more activity information sets.

Conklin fails to disclose a timer which supplies said processor with time information.

Art Unit: 2171

However, Conklin discloses as admitted prior art in Background of the Invention a manufacturer may have to halt production because parts are not shipped on time [col 9, lines 1-12].

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the admitted prior art disclosed by Conklin to include a timer which supplies said processor with time information.

The ordinarily skilled artisan would have been motivated to modify Conklin per the above for the purpose of preventing missed delivery schedules [col 9, lines 1-12].

Claim 12:

Conklin discloses a processor storing, in the database, activity item evaluation information representing whether each of the plurality of activity items has been attained, in association with each of the plurality of activity item information sets [col 19, lines 65-67].

Claim 13:

Conklin discloses a processor controlling the display device of the terminal to display the one or more activity item information sets in association with the activity item evaluation information, by stage [Fig 1m and col 20, lines 47-61].

Claim 14:

Conklin discloses said processor stores in the database, in a case where the activity item evaluation information represents that each of the activity items each associated with one of the plurality of stages has been attained, stage completion information representing that the one of the plurality of stages has been completed [Fig 1m and col 20, lines 47-61].

Claim 17:

Conklin discloses the elements of claim 11 as noted above.

Conklin fails to disclose the database is included in said storage section.

Conklin discloses as admitted prior art wherein the database is included in said storage section [col 13, lines 45-47].

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Conklin to include the database is included in said storage section as disclosed by Conklin as admitted prior art.

The ordinarily skilled artisan would have been motivated to modify Conklin per the above for the purpose of providing information which can be easily searched and retrieved.

***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Etienne LeRoux whose telephone number is (703) 305-0620. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday – Friday from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Safet Metjahic, can be reached on (703) 308-1436.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-3900.

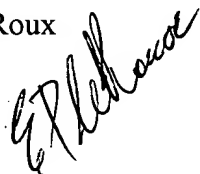
Application/Control Number: 09/964,585  
Art Unit: 2171

Page 14

Patent related correspondence can be forwarded via the following FAX number (703)  
872-9306

Etienne LeRoux

2/12/2004

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Etienne LeRoux', written over the printed name and date.